

# City of Tualatin Photo Red Light Program



*City of Tualatin*

2019 Legislative Report

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The City of Tualatin provides this report in accordance with ORS 810.434 (4) and ORS 192.245.

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## I. Introduction, Background & Building

### **Introduction**

The City of Tualatin began utilizing intersection safety cameras, also known as Photo Red Light Camera Enforcement, in December 2010. Intersection Safety Cameras consist of cameras installed at a specific intersection, in order to enforce traffic laws by photographing and video-recording drivers when they run the red lights. The intersection safety cameras are connected to the traffic signals as well as sensors that monitor the traffic flow at the intersection's crosswalks. The traffic signal is continuously monitored by the system and the cameras are triggered when a vehicle enters the intersection at a pre-established minimum speed and following a specific amount of time after the signal has turned red. Cameras record the date, time of day, time elapsed since the beginning of the red signal, and vehicle speed.

Typically, there are four photographs mailed to each offender, which include the vehicle as it is entering the intersection after the light turns red, a close-up of the driver's face, a close-up of the vehicle's license plate, and the vehicle exiting the intersection.

A frequent traffic complaint received by the Tualatin Police Department involves "Red Light Violators". Intersection safety camera enforcement has shown to be a more cost effective, safer method of decreasing red light violations. The conviction rate has also proven to be higher. Statistics not only show a decrease in red light violations compared to number of vehicles travelling on the roadway, but also a significant decrease in injury crashes resulting from drivers running red lights.

In order for police to have a substantial impact on red light violations at an intersection, they would have to constantly be present at that intersection. This would take several officers being assigned strictly to one location, which is not feasible, nor does it provide a benefit to the rest of the city. The benefit of the intersection safety camera system is that it can be present at the designated intersection all of the time.

Another benefit is safety. When an officer stops a violator in traffic, the risk to the officer's safety as well as the driver greatly increases. In addition, surrounding traffic becomes more congested. The intersection safety camera system enables traffic to continue to move smoothly and allow officers to safely provide their services to other citizens in need.

## Background

Intersection safety cameras were first mentioned during the 2006-2007 City of Tualatin budget process. It was mentioned again during the 2007-2008 budget process, at which time it was further discussed and the members of the Tualatin City Council directed the police department to do further research. A presentation was given by Tualatin Police Chief, Kent Barker (Ret.), to the Tualatin City Council in September 2007. It was at that time and at the direction of the members of the Tualatin City Council to enter into a letter of intent to have a vendor conduct an evaluation of the most dangerous intersections in Tualatin.

In December 2007, a survey/evaluation was conducted by Redflex Traffic Systems at the top four intersections in Tualatin with the highest crash/injury rates, at that time. The results of the study confirmed that the highest number of red light violations were at Lower Boones Ferry Road and Bridgeport Road/72nd Avenue.

In May 2008, the results of the survey/evaluation were brought to a city council work session. The members of the Tualatin City Council directed Chief Barker (Ret.) and the City of Tualatin to enter into a contract with Redflex Traffic Systems to install up to eight intersection safety camera systems within the city, but to start with just one intersection first. The selected intersection was Lower Boones Ferry Road at Bridgeport Road/72nd Avenue.

However, in November 2009, a second survey/evaluation was conducted by Redflex Traffic Systems at the intersections with a high crash/injury rate. The results confirmed that the highest number of red-light violations were at Tualatin-Sherwood Road and Avery Street.

## Building

Permits were issued for the Tualatin-Sherwood/Avery Street intersection first. And that was the only system operating during the calendar year 2010. The system became operational November 1, 2010 and a warning period was instituted until December 10, 2010. Citations were issued to violators from December 11 through December 31, 2010. The issuance of intersection safety camera related citations has continued since the photo red light camera became operational.

Permits were later issued for the Lower Boones Ferry Road and Bridgeport Road/72nd Avenue intersection. This system became operational February 15, 2011 and a warning period was instituted until March 31, 2011. Citations were issued to violators beginning April 1, 2011 and have continued since that time.

The Tualatin intersections with intersection safety cameras are:

- Tualatin-Sherwood Road and Avery Street
- Lower Boones Ferry Road and Bridgeport Road/72nd Avenue

## II. Public Information Campaign

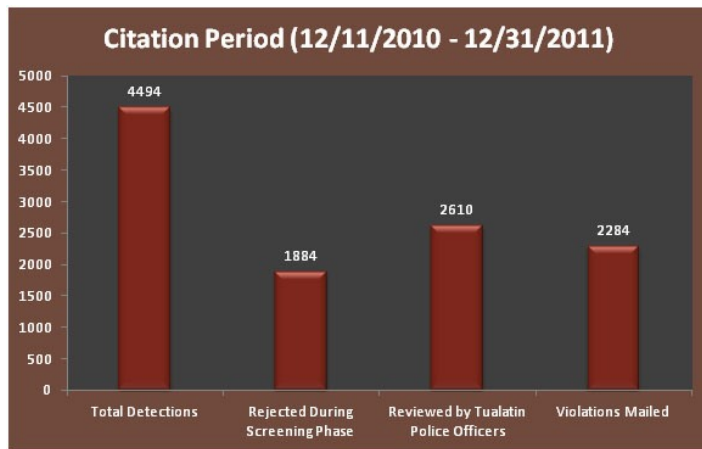
The City of Tualatin conducted an extensive public information campaign. This campaign began in September 2007 and continued through the time of camera installation and implementation in December 2010. The campaign consisted of presentations at public meetings and City Council work sessions, numerous news articles in local newspapers, press releases provided to all local media outlets, brochures made available to the public, and a dedicated web page linked to our City's website. The following is a chronological list of events intended to inform the public:

- September 24, 2007, City Council Work Session presentation
- September 27, 2007, The Times Community Newspaper coverage
- December 17-18, 2007, Redflex Traffic Systems' video survey of top four crash intersections
- May 12, 2008, City Council Work Session presentation
- May 15, 2008, The Times Community Newspaper coverage
- September 2, 2008, Tualatin Rotary Club presentation
- November 20, 2008, Tualatin Chamber of Commerce presentation
- March 27, 2009, The Times Community Newspaper coverage
- October 20, 2010, City of Tualatin Photo Red Light webpage made available
- November 1, 2010, Tualatin Today Community Newsletter coverage mailed to all Tualatin residents
- November 11, 2010, The Times Community Newspaper coverage
- November 12, 2010, Oregonian Newspaper coverage
- November 22, 2010, City Council Presentation and CCTV Public Broadcast
- November 23, 2010, City of Tualatin webpage updated
- December 1, 2010, City of Tualatin webpage updated with videos
- December 1, 2010, Portland Tribune Newspaper coverage
- September 26, 2011, City Council Presentation and CCTV Public Broadcast
- Public campaign brochure distributed and on display at several public venues and businesses such as the Public Library, City Hall, Chamber of Commerce, and other businesses
- February 11, 2013, City Council Presentation during Council Work Session
- February 21, 2013, City of Tualatin webpage updated.
- January 16, 2017, Info on social media soliciting program feedback

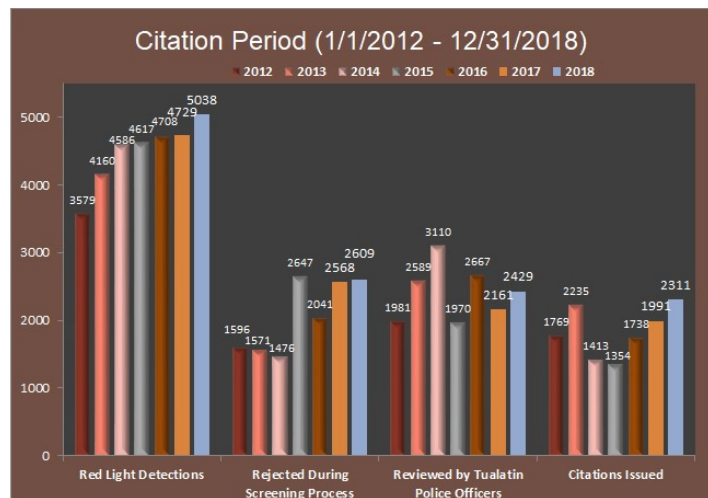
### III. Process and Outcome Evaluation

#### A. The Effect of the Use of the Cameras on Traffic Safety

The City of Tualatin began utilizing Intersection Safety Cameras on November 1, 2010. A warning period was in effect from November 1st through December 10th. Citations were first issued to violators beginning December 11, 2010.

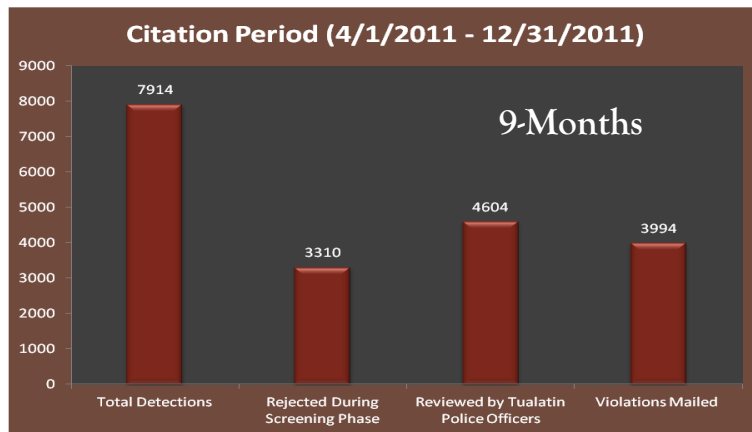


#### Tualatin-Sherwood Road and Avery Street

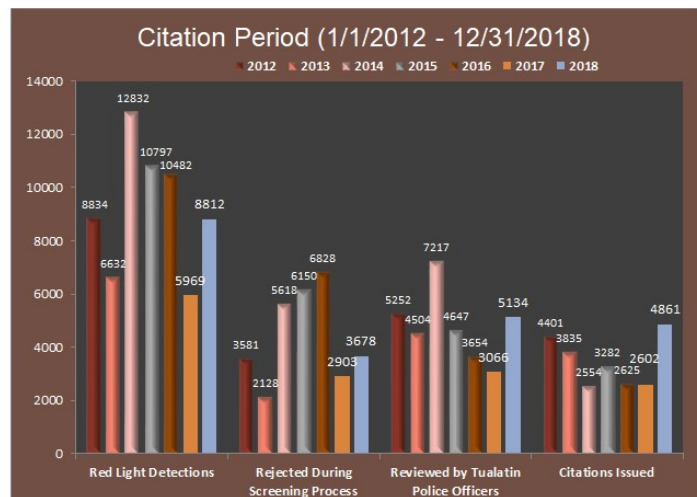


The graphs above represent the number of camera detections and citations issued during the past eight calendar years at the Tualatin-Sherwood Road and Avery Street intersection. Tualatin Police Department has seen a fluctuation in violations from 2011 to 2018. Over the past few years there has been an increase in citations issued for red light violations, in conjunction with the rise in number of vehicles traveling through this intersection. A crash analysis indicates that the rate of injury crashes has gone down and that the majority of the crashes that occur are minor, non-injury and due to drivers following too close. No fatal crashes have occurred at this location.

The City of Tualatin installed Intersection Safety Cameras at a second intersection, located at **Lower Boones Ferry Road and Bridgeport Road/72nd Avenue**. A warning period was in effect from February 15 through March 31, 2011. Citations were first issued to violators at this intersection on April 1, 2011.



### Lower Boones Ferry Road and Bridgeport Road/72nd Avenue



The graphs above represent the number of camera detections and citations issued during the past seven calendar years and nine months at the **Lower Boones Ferry Road and Bridgeport Road/72nd Avenue** intersection. Again, Tualatin Police Department has seen a fluctuation in violations from 2011 to 2018 with a recent increase in citations issued, in conjunction with the increased traffic flow through the intersection. A crash analysis indicates that the rate of injury crashes has gone down and that the majority of the crashes that occur are minor, non-injury and due to drivers following too close. No fatal crashes have occurred at this location.

## **B. The Degree of Public Acceptance of the Use of Cameras**

The City of Tualatin conducted a formal survey on intersection safety cameras in March 2013. The results obtained throughout the public information campaign, during the time our systems have been operational and through the formal survey indicate public acceptance of the intersection safety cameras.

During a State-of-the-City address given by former Mayor Lou Ogden, he told our chamber of commerce members, “I hope the city makes zero dollars off of this system, because that means everyone is obeying the traffic laws and keeping our streets safer.”

## **C. The Process of Administration of the Use of Cameras**

The use of intersection safety cameras in Tualatin follows a specific process, to include checks and balances and falling in compliance with all legislative requirements as outlined in ORS 810.434 and 810.436, consisting of:

- Violation Detection—A vehicle must travel across the white intersection stop line (crosswalk) after the light has turned red to activate the intersection safety camera.
- Quality Control Checks—Redflex Traffic Systems, Tualatin’s intersection safety camera vendor, performs a series of checks and balances to ensure the camera was in proper working order when the violation occurred and that the digital photographs, violation data and owner information are accurate. If any of these checkpoints do not pass Redflex Traffic Systems’ quality control standards, then citations are not issued.
- Police Officer Review—A Tualatin police officer reviews the video and image of the violation and determines if a citation is to be issued. If the decision is made to issue a citation, the officer enters their electronic signature on the citation and Redflex Traffic Systems mails the citation to the registered owner of the vehicle.
- Certificate of Innocence—If the registered owner receives a citation and they were not the driver at the time of the violation, they can complete a Certificate of Innocence or Certificate of Non-Liability form in response.
- Defendant Response—If a citation is issued for a violation that has occurred, the defendant is given the opportunity to respond by mail or appear in court. They have the option of pleading guilty, not guilty, or no contest.
- Municipal Court Process—Each citation is entered into the jurisdiction of the City of Tualatin’s Municipal Court. These citations follow the same process as all other citations entered into the court, which affords the violator all of the same rights and options as anyone with a traffic citation issued by an actual police officer.